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THE
HALF-TIME SYSTEM IN EDUCATION.

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Science Association.

THE present paper is based on one which was read before the Department of Health, at the general meeting of the Social Science Association, in September, 1877. As now given, it is reprinted from the Report for 1878, of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor. It had received careful revision in the meantime, with some additions. It may be proper to state that for the positions taken, the author is to be held responsible.

The discussion to which the present paper is devoted is based on personal inquiry and observation, largely aided by correspondence. All letters used were written within seven months of the date of this publication. An attempt has also been made to obtain some *data* for establishing a physiological basis for the argument respecting the length of hours of study.

The appended notes contain such accounts of half-time schools in America as have been received, with some remarks on the German system.

DEFINITION.

The expression "half-time system" is employed to designate a plan for educating children of the laboring classes by

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sending them to school for three hours each day, or thereabouts, and employing them in factories, in shops, or on farms, for the rest of the working hours. The plan is modified, in a few cases, by allowing them to attend school for the full time, and to work on full time on alternate days; but in most cases the former method has been adopted, by which half a day's schooling and half or three-quarters of a day's work are had each day, with a half holiday on Saturday afternoon. The system has been most fully carried out in England.

The English half-time schools had their origin in enactments of the years 1833 and 1844, and subsequently; in accordance with which, a great many sorts of manufacturing establishments are forbidden to employ children under eight years of age; while children from eight to thirteen are allowed to work only six and one-half hours a day, and must attend school at least three hours a day, or five hours on alternate days, at any school the parents may select. A full account of the history of these schools is given in the Sixth Annual Report (1875) of this bureau. The system has been in existence for over forty years in England; and at present 100,000 children are taught by its methods. These facts justify our careful examination of the grounds for adopting a system, which, at the outset, was as much an innovation upon English usages as it would be now upon our own.

It is remarkable that in America we have very few schools, if indeed there be any, of this sort. Exception should here be made of public semi-correctional or charitable institutions; and also, of schools which keep but half a day, without provision for manual employment, — a plan which has been adopted in quite a number of cases. The definition we have given requires half a day's work with half a day's schooling, every working day in the year, excepting holidays. This excludes even the one at Salem,¹ where the children attend only half a year, returning to full-time work for the remaining half year; this school, however, comes nearer to a half-time school than any of which the writer has information. A similar school (called the Indian Orchard School² from

¹ The Naumkeag: see Report of this Bureau for 1875, p. 28; also Note A of this Report.

² See Note B.

the name of the mill) flourished a few years ago in the neighborhood of Springfield, but for extrinsic reasons was given up.

As regards the other States, I have received information from the Superintendents of Education in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey ; and the answer in each case has been that they are not aware of the existence of such schools in their States.

The explanation of this absence is not far to seek. We have developed in America a carefully graded system of schools, which differ very little in the various cities of the Northern States, owing, doubtless, to their common origin. Such has been our pride in these schools, and such the real democratic feeling in regard to them, that all classes have readily sent their children ; and all are therefore interested in having the schools well kept. Whether well or ill, they are at all events a representative American institution, and their existence is of itself an adequate reason for the non-existence of other systems.

England, on the contrary, was compelled in the earliest years of this century to limit by legislative action the excessive tasks then laid on great numbers of children in factories. She found, before long, that the surest way to defend them from the cruelties of their taskmasters was to insist on their attendance at school during the ordinary period of a single session every day ; and it was this measure, taken at first quite as much from a feeling of humanity as from a sense of the need of popular education, that formed a first step in the great national reform, which, within a few years, has assumed universal extension. The history of factories in America has been very different from this ; and the change in our population, which has flooded us with foreign illiteracy, has been comparatively recent.

The enormous difficulty of securing concerted action from different States is, no doubt, another reason why no half-time system has been introduced. Of the 13,000 children in Massachusetts factories, only 4,575 had received during the year the legal amount of schooling (three months) in 1875. If such indifference is felt toward the interests of this unfortunate class in individual States, what is likely to be the joint action of several States in a matter where the profits of

principals and the wages of laborers are directly dependent on their success in diminishing the requirement of schools,—where, in fact, State is in closest rivalry with State for commercial advantage?

LIMITS OF MENTAL APPLICATION.

It seemed to the author that the principles of “half-time” study could be better understood if a previous statement were made of the amount of school work that experience has shown to be desirable for children of different ages. The attempt will therefore be made to answer the following preliminary question:—

“How many hours ought scholars to devote to school work in order to gain the best results, excluding manual labor from the problem?”

The capacity for mental labor differs very widely in individuals, and at different ages. The young adult of average power, of the age of 20 or near that, may devote 8 or 9 hours to close mental work; the youth in high schools, 5 or 6; the younger child, from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{1}{2}$. No greater amount can be exacted of the average without doing harm. The following expressions of opinion will be of interest.

In regard to young men in college, a gentleman of great experience and judgment as a tutor writes as follows: “I should be inclined to say that no young man could study effectively (as our young men are now) day in and day out, more than 6 hours a day, exclusive of recitations; with three recitations *per diem*, I should say he could work in all 9 hours per day. If you get up to four recitations or lectures, I should be inclined to knock off one hour of study, putting 9 hours in work as the maximum. I think one would find any increase of that of no real service.”

A distinguished graduate of Harvard College, who worked faithfully 12 hours a day during his freshman year, and from 8 to 9 the rest of the time, gives me his opinion, that the average working power (though not the actual amount of work) of the students is measured by the latter figures,—8 or 9 hours.

Professors Crowell, Tyler, and Hitchcock, of Amherst, consider that the happiest results are produced by a weekly

amount of 48 hours of work, or 8 hours a day, divided between recitation and study in the proportions of 16 and 32 hours.

Professor Goodell of the Massachusetts Agricultural College places it, after having tried both ways, at 18 and 36 hours respectively, or one hour more per day. The actual work amounts to about $19\frac{1}{2}$ and 39 hours, or nearly 10 hours daily, besides $6\frac{1}{4}$ of drill and farm work weekly. The results seem, however, to be quite favorable, as far as the actual health of the young men is concerned.

At the West Point Military Academy the daily time assigned by the printed table to study and recitations is about 10 hours a day during the six cold months. The exceptional circumstances of the cadet's life, his entire exclusion from the distractions of society and the dangers of indulged appetite, and the large amount of active bodily work done by him, enable him to reach the maximum of mental application consistent with perfect health.

The great number of hours which may be studied by the young adult is the result of two circumstances: first, he is no longer obliged to devote a great part of his physical energies to the mere act of growing; second, he is a specimen of a select class of society, capable both by birth and by long habit of an amount of labor which is impossible to the untrained of any age. At the period of puberty, or from 12 to 17 years, there is a prevalent opinion, in which I coincide, that not more than 5 or 6 hours should be required. In a set of replies to inquiries instituted by me two years ago, there are communications from the principals of 12 high schools. The usual attendance per week in these schools was 25 hours, three exceeding and one falling below this. All required home study: two, 1 hour; seven, from 1 to 2 hours; three, from 2 to 3 hours daily. On the average, 35 hours a week is the usual total requirement, but 3 schools required from 41 to 45. One correspondent said he was accustomed to see pupils worked 60 hours a week, and reprobated the practice severely.

We hear much of the German capacity for study; but it is doubtful if there be much difference between their abilities in this direction and our own. They work the boys in their gymnasia almost to death. What must be the rigor of a system which so fills the whole life, that boys of 17, on their

afternoon walks, talk of nothing but their Greek and Latin classics! I have recently conversed with two gentlemen, graduates of the gymnasia at Frankfort-on-the-Oder and Halle. The former gave an estimate of 9 or 10 hours of daily work: while the latter, a physician, who stood at the head of his class in the school, named 8 or 9, and declared 6 to be enough; he added, however, that only one of his class died directly from the effects of application.

As regards girls, the Prussian Government has lately taken official steps to ascertain the fact in question. The conference upon superior schools for girls, held August, 1873, in the Department of Public Education, reported in favor of restricting girls from 10 to 16 years of age to a maximum of 30 hours of school attendance per week; the younger ones, down to the age of 6, were to be limited to 22 or 24 hours. Home studies were to be restricted to one hour for the youngest, two for the oldest, and one and one-half for those between. It should be said that the declared object of such schools is a liberal one, namely, to enable the pupils "to participate in the intellectual life of the nation;" which implies a select class of pupils, inasmuch as the avowed object of the ordinary German school (*Volksschule*) is to fit common people for a commonplace life.

Our own practice is to keep children of all ages, from six up to 16, in both primary and grammar schools, the same number of hours in school; namely, 26. In Boston this is now reduced to 25, and home study is seldom permitted. There is some ground for supposing that this state of things—this placing scholars of six on an equal footing with those of 16—is the result of oversight rather than of plan. The State Superintendent of Maine, Hon. William G. Corthell, declares that from five to seven years of age, 2 or 3 hours a day of earnest study are enough; for those from seven to ten, 3 or 3½; from ten to twelve, 4 hours; for all older pupils, not over 5 hours, or, if they do not study under pressure, 6. The Superintendent in Providence, Rev. Daniel Leach, considers the primary school hours too long; and the State Superintendent of New York, Hon. William Wood, would not object to limiting the time of the schools generally to 2 hours in the forenoon and 2 in the afternoon; State Superintendent Downs of New Hampshire says that from four to ten years it is best not

to be in school, in full intellectual employment, more than 3 hours a day. The Medico-Legal Society of New York recommends that the maximum of schooling for children under eight be 3 hours a day.

Finally, children in kindergartens are allowed the greatest reasonable freedom, have their employment changed constantly, play active games, and sing in concert, and their operations are regularly broken by a lunch; and the period of time which children of from 4 to 7 can be kept at this sort of employment is held to be about 3 hours, from 9.30 to 12.30; they are not allowed a second session in the day.

An effort to obtain from experienced teachers some kind of a law of mental capacity was made in 1860 by Edwin Chadwick, C.B., well known for his efforts in connection with the English half-time system. The results as published nearly agree with each other. One teacher replied that the length of time children could attend closely and voluntarily to a single lesson was, from 5 to 7 years, about 15 minutes; from 7 to 10 years, about 20 minutes; from 10 to 12 years, about 25 minutes; from 12 to 16 or 18 years, about 30 minutes. Relief is obtained, and fresh interest and power called out, by judicious changes of subject and intermissions; under which conditions he found that children of the four groups of ages above named could profitably labor mentally not over the respective periods of 3, $3\frac{1}{2}$, 4, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours a day.

This statement is cited simply as the most elaborate, and as representing the general tenor of a good many. In view of the other opinions I have cited, it is impossible to call it extreme; and the care with which the circumstances are stated gives it a distinct scientific value.

The following quotation is from the pen of the late Miss Mary Carpenter of London, well known for her thorough and practical devotion to the welfare of the poorer classes:—

“ My experience has been both among the children of the educated classes of society and those of the working and lower classes. The condition and wants of the two classes are very different, and therefore the same general principles of education must be modified to the circumstances and wants of each. . . . A day school is intended to supply such parts of the education as can not be conducted in the home. The nature of the day school must be modified to be truly supplementary to the home. My experience respecting the education of the superior classes is based on a much esteemed boarding school for young gentlemen,

conducted for about thirty years by my late father, Rev. Dr. Lane Carpenter, in which I received my own education, and latterly gave some assistance; and a boarding school for young ladies subsequently conducted by myself and family for above fifteen years. I have always paid great attention to the education of the working classes, and during the last thirteen years to that of the 'perishing and dangerous classes.'

"1. In the higher or more cultivated classes, where the organization is more adapted to mental exercise, and the culture of the intellectual powers is essential to after-life, I do not think eight hours *per diem* too much to be employed in direct instruction, if the time is judiciously divided and the teaching good, and so varied in subject as to prevent at any time an undue strain on the mind. Of this time at least two hours for boys and three hours for girls should be occupied with lighter pursuits, not requiring much mental effort in the rudimentary processes, such as penmanship, drawing, needle-work, and music; nine hours should be allowed for sleep. Regular walks off the premises daily are important, and varied muscular exercises on them. . . .

"2. I believe three hours *per diem* of good scholastic instruction would be amply sufficient for the children of the working classes, and of the neglected classes, if I may so call that class below them; but this must be supplemented in the case of boys by two or three hours of manual occupations, involving skill, exactness, manual aptitude; and, in that of girls, needle-work and other domestic occupations. This education should be continued at least until twelve years of age, if possible until fourteen, when boys are apprenticed, and should be supplemented with all by one and a half or two hours' instruction in an evening school. The study of languages and other branches of knowledge which require great length of time is not necessary for this class; and I believe, from observation, that this time well employed is amply sufficient. It is exceeded at present in common day schools for girls, who quite equal the boys who have had two hours longer." . . .

Such opinions as the foregoing have a weight proportioned to the intelligence and experience of their authors. Their general tenor seems to indicate that children under 12 are capable of far less mental work than adults,—probably not exceeding three or four hours a day. Or in other words, no labor in excess of this limit increases the mental result of a day's work: it rather injures the quality of the result.

For an illustration of the mental and moral gain resulting from cutting down the hours of study in a primary school from six to three hours daily, the reader is referred to notes C and G, at the close. There is strong evidence (notes G, I, J) tending to show that such a simple reduction of hours is likely to be extremely unpopular with parents; a state of things much to be regretted, but necessary to be taken into account.

STUDY COMBINED WITH WORK.

In the case of children at work, the question assumes a different form. Their occupation protects them from the perils of idleness, thus removing one chief objection to short sessions. And, more than this, there seems to be a special mutual influence between the school and the factory, which improves the quality of the work done in each.

It is a remarkable fact that, in a great many instances, the half-time children working in the same schools with full-timers are known to accomplish as much work and make as much progress. This may be seen in the Report for 1871 of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor, and in the original report by Mr. Chadwick. As regards the standard of attainments, one of his correspondents stated that a class of children, say of seven years, taken from an infant school, could in three years, under the half-time system, be brought (with full control of the means) to "reading intelligently, writing fairly, and spelling correctly; and carried in arithmetic as far as decimals, exclusive of problems." Another says that, of 21 boys and girls taken direct from the infant school, in three years 16 had reached the following point: writing a fair hand, spelling well, reading correctly and with considerable attention to the meaning, working sums in decimal fractions with ease, showing a fair knowledge of the general geography of the world and the particular geography of Great Britain, a fair knowledge of the great leading events in the history of Great Britain, parsing and analyzing ordinary simple sentences.

Another says, "The question between the half-time and full-time system, educationally and practically, is a question between habits of concentrated attention during a short time, and habits of more or less diffused attention during a longer time."

Another: "I attribute the equality of the half-timers to the full-timers, chiefly to the habits of industrial occupations, to their better attention to what they set about. They certainly come to their school work with better habits of attention than the day scholars."

Another: "I have a decided opinion that the admixture of industrial occupation tends to make the scholars industrious in the school. The half-timers do not trifle or waste their

time so much as the day scholars. The half-timers set to their writing or their lessons with great earnestness, and with more business-like qualities."

The positive advantage of combining useful labor with study is manifold. Long before boys understand the meaning of democracy, they know the difference between industry and idleness, productive and unproductive employment, and feel the strongest impulses to practical and useful activity. The mind must be taught economy, industry, punctuality, attention; the hand, skill and strength; the instinctive feelings must be trained to a respect for labor wherever this is possible. It is undeniable that our schools are defective in this respect. They tend to teach the boys to live by their wits rather than their hands. In the case of girls, the culmination of their results is the production of teachers,—girls who leave school at 18, with their heads full of various knowledge crammed in by force, but unable to set their hands to a single thing: the only thing they are good for is to make others like themselves. Surely the whole blame is not in the schools, but largely with the public. Nevertheless the schools must set the public an example of use as well as of culture: it will be followed.

CONCLUSIONS.

The definition with which this paper begins renders it unnecessary to discuss the condition of children in places where there are no manufactures. For us the questions to be solved are these:—

1. Will the 12,000 factory children and the unnumbered children in other light employments in Massachusetts be best off in schools kept five months of each year for six hours a day, or in schools which are kept ten months for three hours a day?

In the opinion of the writer and of most professional teachers whom he has consulted, the latter alternative is very far to be preferred, as respects the child's progress in study. The law requires factory children to attend for 20 weeks in a year, i.e., five months; which leaves an interval of seven months to forget what they have already learned. It is true that the country population of New England was brought up on 13 weeks of schooling a year; but the circumstances

of their life, and the universal spirit of free thought, active intelligence, and enterprise, prevailing among this class forty years ago, made the result of this scanty provision a very different one from that which is to be expected among the rough, unintelligent children, living in illiterate homes, who are found in such numbers in our factories. A vacation of one or two days leaves children's minds in a demoralized condition; a three-months' summer vacation, among children of the most intelligent class, is thought a very great drawback to their progress in study: seven months of illiteracy can not but seriously injure the progress of children who are destitute of other mental stimulus than that afforded by the schools. Either, therefore, the children should be sent for half a day all the year round to the ordinary town schools (which is not at all impracticable), or else special half-time schools should be established. The writer would recommend that such schools should be established in a limited number, say 6 or 12, of the great manufacturing centres of the State; and that care should be taken to place the experiment in the hands of a person or persons practically acquainted with the system, and desirous of its success.

That the interests of mill owners would suffer by the experiment, does not seem probable. A certain amount of attention to details of certificates will be necessary; some annoyance, but scarcely loss, may result from the new arrangement.

2. Ought the State to forbid the labor of children under 12 or under 15?

In strictness, the writer is not bound to answer this question. Nevertheless, as it is clear that an affirmative answer would destroy the ground for establishing half-time schools, the following is offered in reply. Our State occupies a nearly medium or neutral position, forbidding labor in factories before the age of 10, while in England it is allowed (half-time) at 8, and in Prussia not before 12. The option between full-time schools for 20 weeks, and half-time schools for the whole period of labor, is also allowed in Massachusetts. Hence it would seem that the conflict lies between those who assert the injurious effect of manufacturing labor upon the health and growth of children, and those who claim that the withdrawal of a considerable amount of

young labor will injure the resources of working families and the labor supply of some branches of manufacture. The writer declines to offer a decision; both as being, at present, unconvinced that factory labor is severe or injurious to any considerable extent to children over 10 years of age working on half-time, and from an unwillingness to assume the presentation of arguments relating to the exigencies of trade, manufactures, or domestic economy among the poor in this and adjacent States. Such arguments should be sought from political economists.

The injury supposed to result to the health of children is by no means fully proved. Statistics are wanting; and to obtain a proper amount would require a minute and systematic examination of large masses of children in factory districts and country districts. And it is here recommended that such examinations be authorized and paid for by the State, with a view to establishing a basis for future legislation.

It is perhaps not out of place to add one further recommendation; namely, that the laws intended to compel the attendance at school of all children from 8 to 14 years of age should be enforced by the authority of the State, and by truant officers of its own, instead of being left to the discretion of each town and city.

A certain prejudice exists against the establishment of schools for distinct classes of the population. The importance of maintaining the self-respect of all classes is obvious; but the discussion of the principle is here omitted, a quotation being simply made from the Report of the Fall River School Committee for 1876-7.¹

"The committee desired to abolish factory schools because the reasons for their establishment were sometimes misconstrued, and a consequent prejudice excited against them, by parents who were expected to send their children to them. It was feared their tendency was to impart the feeling, that the children who work in our mills are expected to obtain only the minimum amount of instruction, and that to be acquired in separate schools; and that by this process of isolation and restricted opportunities,—deprived of the usual methods of mingling with the mass of the pupils of

¹ See Note E.

the city on equal terms and under similar educational conditions,—they would eventually regard themselves as a separate class in the community, occupying a relatively low position in society, and not equally responsible with its more favored members for good order and prosperity.”

NOTE A.

The Naumkeag half-time school was visited by the writer in the afternoon of Jan. 11, 1878. The hours are from nine to half-past eleven, A.M., and from one to half-past three, P.M.

The whole number belonging to the school is 66, of whom 59 are half-time children from the Naumkeag Mills; all under one teacher. Most of the children are of French Canadian parentage, and have to be taught English in the school. Three were from a German family, recent immigrants, not operatives, but attending the school in order to learn English before entering the common schools. The ages range from ten to fifteen, and the previous attainments of the children vary at least as much as their ages. The division into morning and afternoon sections is not made in conformity with age, but to suit the demands of their occupation. The exercises are so ordered as to have as few as possible unemployed, and much tact is used in overcoming the essential difficulties of teaching such a class. These difficulties are much increased by the fact that the scholars do not attend continuously, but only for six months at a time, alternating with six months of mill work on full time. This does not constitute a compliance with the statute of 1876, ch. 52, § 2, which provides that “a regular attendance during the continuance of such employment [i.e., work in factories] . . . may be accepted by said school committee as a substitute for the attendance herein required.” The question being put to those present, some were found to have attended the school previous to the present half-year, of whom two were in their third and two in their fourth term. It seems to the writer impossible to draw conclusions respecting the value of half-time schools from so small a number of scholars in an ungraded school, under such peculiar circumstances as to language, and coming as they do but half the year.

NOTE B.

The Indian Orchard school was supported from the school fund as appropriated by the city; it had about 40 scholars, 20 at each session, aged from thirteen to fifteen years; 26 boys and 14 girls of French and Irish parentage. None were entirely ignorant of English, but very few knew the alphabet. C. J. Goodwin, Superintendent of the Indian Orchard Mills, writes as follows:—

“We found it better to employ two sets of children in the mills, employing them half a day each, and half a day at school. They were desirous to learn, made rapid progress, were punctual and well-behaved. They made more progress than children of similar ages in full-time schools. Reading, writing, and arithmetic were the studies pursued. I

think scholars of these ages, and no farther advanced in their studies, learn as rapidly with three hours' instruction each day as they would with more. It is a disadvantage to be out of school six months at a time, for those who are just commencing their studies. The scholars who are more advanced do not suffer so much from the loss.

"Our half-time school was a success; but a reduction of wages was necessary, to conform to the decrease in working hours from eleven to ten [by the ten-hour law], and the parents of the children could not support them if allowed to work but half a day. So the school was abandoned."

NOTE C.

[From Rev. J. H. BRADFORD, Superintendent Massachusetts State Primary School.]

"You ask for facts on the half-time system. I believe in it strongly, having introduced it where it has succeeded for seven years. The school hours were from two till five, P.M. All the morning was occupied with manual labor, every child, however small, being responsible for something; and this individual responsibility was transferred to the school-room, and commendable progress was made. I have not tried the same child first with one system and then with the other, nor am I able to say positively in all cases that children will learn as much with three hours' school as with six; but I am so far convinced I was right in the matter, that I should not wish to exchange, even if school was the sole result desired. When, however, the fact of learning how to work is added, the result is very much more favorable. It is not *how long*, but *how* they study, that decides the result. . . . These children finished all their tasks at half-past one, P.M., washing, ironing, housework, cooking, and every sort of manual labor; nothing more was done at it until next morning, except to get the simple supper, and wash up the dishes. The evenings were spent in exercise and reading, and I have never seen children of a private family, or of any other school, accomplish so much. They did not weary of work or school.

"The plan pursued here is essentially the same. The division working in the morning attend school in the afternoon, and *vice versa*. The hours from two till five I consider best for school. Children feel more like study then, and are more ready to work in the morning."

NOTE D.

[From Hon. H. F. HARRINGTON, Superintendent of Schools, New Bedford.]

"The present agents of our mills are as earnest as any can be to have the statutes obeyed for the education of the children they employ. We have, therefore, had a mill school in highly successful operation for between three and four years. The children who attend are sent out of the mills when due at school, and received again when their term of schooling is over. They carry from us certificates stating when they will be due at school again, which are recorded on the mill books, and honored accordingly.

"We have, every year, a class of half-time schools in this way, — that schoolrooms will sometimes be so over-crowded that the only resource is to 'ride and tie,' — take half the scholars into school one half the day, and the rest of them the other half. The result is loss, appreciable loss, proportioned to the difference in the amount of schooling. This is true, no matter what grade of scholars may be in question, from the youngest primarians upward.

"Our mill scholars do not forget every thing they have learned at one term of schooling during the succeeding interval—not by any means; but we have a strong-minded, suggestive woman for their teacher, who stimulates their mental curiosity, and thus makes strong impressions on their minds. She tells me that something is forgotten, but the more prominent and material facts are not."

NOTE E.

[From N. T. DAVIS, M.D., Fall River.]

"We have had no factory schools since September, 1876. While in existence, they were kept without vacation through the year. The children were divided into sections, each section attending thirteen weeks. There is little if any complaint of attempts on the part of mill managers to evade the law. Attempted evasion on the part of parents is common."

NOTE F.

[From JAMES J. HANSON, Principal of Woburn High School.]

"The system you speak of has been practised in Woburn some twelve years, to the general satisfaction of the citizens. The advantages are many, and, to my mind, completely outweigh any disadvantages that might arise."

In a school report for 1875-76, he further says, —

"The scholars are benefited in a sanitary point of view, as they are subjected to the necessary restraint of the schoolroom, and to the ill effects of air more or less impure, a less number of hours per day. They have also the privilege of preparing their lessons at home [in fact, they are obliged to do so], and thus are freed from doing the same work amid the disturbing influences of the classroom. The teachers are also relieved from the double care of conducting recitations, and watching those who are studying in their seats. The general police work of the teachers is considerably less, and thus more time is given for thorough teaching. . . . A more cheerful obedience in the pupils is thereby secured; and, as it keeps them continually reciting, many temptations to wrong-doing are removed, which would otherwise present themselves, and the good effects are seen in a healthier moral tone in the school. The school is more extensively patronized, especially by boys, many of whom can and do work a part of the time out of school, and assist themselves pecuniarily, and still have ample time to learn their lessons, which they could not do under the long-session system, and so would be compelled to stay away altogether."

NOTE G.

[From A. H. LEWIS, formerly Principal of Grammar School No. 5, Elmira, N.Y., and WILLIAM C. WEY, M.D., of the same city.]

Dr. Wey writes, "During the time of my connection with the Board of Education in this city, the half-time plan was adopted in the primary department of one of the schools. The working of the system was so gratifying to the members of the Board who gave the subject attention, and to the principal of the school, that its continuance was regarded as desirable; but the ignorant prejudices of the parents of the children taught in that way, who imagined themselves cheated out of half the advantages their progeny had a right to obtain from the school authorities, caused so much dissatisfaction in the district, that the plan was abandoned, and the former all-day time restored.

"I watched the plan pursued by Mr. Lewis from beginning to end; and to say that I was captivated by it is a feeble expression of my estimate of its moral, physical, and intellectual success."

From Mr. Lewis's statements the following is extracted:—

"The experiment extended to the entire number (over 120) of pupils registered in the two 'C primary' rooms, with two teachers. These pupils were divided into nearly equal portions, — one attending in the morning, the other in the afternoon. Each portion was again subdivided into three divisions, — one of which received literary instruction in Room No. 1, while the other two occupied Room No. 2 for rest and exercise. The teacher in Room No. 1 had charge of but one division, consisting of from 15 to 30 pupils at a time; and the teacher in Room No. 2 had charge of two divisions all the time. One division passed into, and another out of, each room every fifteen minutes.

"Each teacher attended two sessions of school, of three hours each, daily. Under the old way, the 'C primaries' are dismissed half an hour before the regular close of each school session. But our teachers preferred full-time sessions, with half the number of pupils. The labor of teaching a class is incomparably less than that of teaching the same class, and at the same time governing two others. More time is spent in the schoolroom, but the drudgery of the service is gone.

"As regards results, one hundred pupils were promoted during the year, of whom 41 would not have been promoted till a year later if taught under the old plan, thus effecting a saving of forty-one years of school life. In consequence of the large promotion, the department was so much relieved, that it became possible to return to the all-day or full-time practice of the other schools; and in deference to the expressed wishes of the Superintendent and District Commissioner, who were anxious to pacify a few grumblers, the backward step was taken at the commencement of the next school year. It was painfully interesting to me to note the resulting changes, to which I called the attention of the Board in a brief report, from which I now quote:—

"1. It is not possible to maintain as perfect order and discipline this term as it was either of the three preceding terms, even with much greater effort on the part of teachers.

"2. It is not possible to secure such perfect attention either in the physical or intellectual exercises; and, as a consequence, less satisfactory results are obtained in both rooms.

"3. There has been observed more quarrelling among these small children on their way to and from school than in a whole year before."

"I can not, therefore, avoid the conclusion, that in every way, physically, intellectually, and morally, half-day sessions for such pupils are far preferable to all-day sessions."

NOTE II.

[From J. M. GREGORY, LL.D. President Illinois Industrial University.]

"The replies received by me some years ago, from school superintendents and teachers, in response to a circular asking information on the half-time school, are no longer in my possession; but I remember the unanimity with which the testimony came from all who had tried the experiment, that the children taught in the half-time schools made as good progress as those in full time. The best and fullest trial was made in some of the ward schools of Detroit, Mich., where the comparison was made between schools taught under the same Board and regulations, and under a common superintendent. I think that I had testimony from twenty or more places where the experiment had been tried, and with the same result in every case. It was not stated how the children were employed the other part of the day."

NOTE I.

[From Hon. WILLIAM WOOD, President of the Board of Education, New-York City.]

"Allow me to say generally that the *dicta* you lay down are more adapted to the condition of Boston and to other New-England manufacturing towns than to this city. Here we have no cotton mills, no power-loom factories. We have manufactories of various sorts, — breweries, distilleries, carriage factories, boiler factories, etc.; but I don't think that there is that kind of demand for boy and girl operatives which there is in cotton mills, weaving factories, calico print works, etc. . . . Again: on principle, I am opposed to any legislation which would facilitate the employment of children under fourteen in factories of any kind. . . .

"So far as my own opinion goes, I would be better pleased with two sessions of two hours each in our common schools than with one of three, and another of two, as at present; but this would by no means meet the views of the large body of our poorer citizens, who in reality use our schools, especially our primary schools and departments, as *quasi* nurseries. They, both father and mother, have to work for a living; and it is, they think, a great blessing to have their children well cared for during five working hours at least.

"Our school system is devised for the wants of our enormous population as it exists, and it would derange it greatly to have half-time day schools. The place of such schools is, to a certain extent, supplied by our common evening schools, which are carried on from the first Monday in October to the end of February."

NOTE J.

[From Hon. J. L. PICKARD, lately Superintendent of Schools, Chicago.]

"In reply to your query regarding half-day sessions in Chicago schools, I must say that they have not, in the main, proved successful. In certain neighborhoods of an intelligent constituency, the result of the experiment was for a time gratifying. Since, however, the establishment of these half-day schools was the result of insufficient accommodations, and since the excess of population was greatest in the poorer districts, where home-training is almost entirely neglected, the average result of the experiment has not encouraged its extension, or warranted its continuance. For the child restricted to a half-day's instruction, there seemed to be nothing left for the other half-day but the lessons of the street. Many children have been found at the end of a year but little wiser, and often less studious, than at the beginning. . . .

"We have had no experience in schools for manufactory children, except in evening school work, which has always proved beneficial as well as beneficent.

"An experiment is just now being tried with schools for any who can not be bound by the ordinary rules of attendance, and with promise of success. These schools are ungraded, and admit — for such hours as pupils can come — those who are kept from full-time schools. The instruction is individual."

NOTE K.

[From Hon. W. T. HARRIS, Superintendent of Schools, St. Louis.]

"To some extent, we have tried it in the primary grades (first year's work) for three years. Teachers, for the most part, think that pupils learn about as much the first year in half-time schools as in whole time. One set of pupils comes in the morning, and another in the afternoon." — See Report for 1874-75, p. 23.

The report referred to contains the following statements:—

"The policy of half-time schools is under trial at present in a few schools whose accommodations are inadequate to the wants of their districts. This is tried only in the first year of the primary school. One set of pupils comes in the morning, and another one in the afternoon. In this way the capacity of the school is greatly increased without much additional expense to the Board. An extra teacher is employed to assist the regular ones in instructing the new classes formed. The observation made in Chicago, that the progress of the pupils in their studies is reported to be nearly as rapid as by the whole-time plan, is generally indorsed by our own teachers." — Page 23.

NOTE L.

[From an address delivered by EDWIN CHADWICK, before the British Social Science Association, 1877.]

"Certain large institutions for the care of destitute orphan children in England have had their death rates steadily reduced to about three in

one thousand, which is nearly one-fourth of the rate of mortality for school ages.

“The schools are on the half-time principle, which we introduced with the factory acts, as preventive of the physical injury done by over-sedentary work in the long-time schools; and I may add, that by a better adjustment of the book teaching to the children’s mental powers of receptivity, and by the freshening up of the faculties by brisk bodily exercises in the voluntary drill, these children, though naturally of an inferior mental type, are got well through the three R’s in less than four years as against seven in the common elementary schools, and at one-half the cost for teaching power, and with the economical outcome, that the efficiency of three is imparted to two for industrial occupations.”

NOTE M.

[From M. F.,¹ Inspector of Volksschulen; dated Karlsruhe, Nov. 30, 1877.]

“The elementary school called *Volksschule* is in the Duchy of Baden, regularly or legally a half-day school. A completely normal *Volksschule* in Baden would be arranged as follows:—

“1. The obligatory age for attending school being fixed at from the seventh to the fourteenth year inclusive, there will be eight classes, each receiving entirely distinct instruction.

“2. To every teacher are given two classes, to one of which he gives instruction in the forenoon, to the other in the afternoon; to each sixteen hours a week. The school time is fixed to the hours of seven to ten and one to four o’clock (or twelve to three); in winter time from eight to eleven instead of seven to ten. To such a school four teachers are assigned; and one of this class will be erected in any place where four hundred scholars, or thereabouts, are ready for this kind of instruction. In most villages this plan will naturally be modified. Where there is only one teacher (i.e., where there are 120 scholars, or less), he instructs in the forenoon the scholars of the five upper or elder years together; in most subjects in two or three divisions. In the afternoon come the three lower classes in two divisions.

“Where there are two teachers, one takes as first class the youngest year, as second class the second and third years: the other teacher takes as third class the fourth and fifth years, and as fourth class the three eldest years.

“Where there are three teachers (360 scholars or less), one has the first year as Class 1, and the second as Class 2; the second teacher has the third year as Class 3, and the fourth and fifth as Class 4; the third teacher has the sixth year as Class 5, and the seventh and eighth years as Class 6. Each teacher instructs in the morning his older scholars, and the younger in the afternoon.

“An experience of many years has produced the general conviction among school authorities and teachers, that, instead of instructing too many or too different grades of scholars together for twenty-six or thirty hours a week, it is better to divide them, and to give only sixteen hours

¹For this and the following communication, I am indebted to the kindness of Dr. George Varrentrapp of Frankfort-on-the-Main.

to each. In this respect, we go so far, that where, for instance, in a school with three teachers, the fourth class has upwards of 60 scholars, this class will again be divided in two divisions or years, and each division receive instruction for only two hours a day. In such a case, the teacher has to instruct, in one day, three classes, one after the other. Even this arrangement is judged a good shift where there is a deficiency of teachers. It is a principle to give to the teacher in one class as few different grades of age as may be; if possible, only one. If the necessary number of teachers exists, each child shall receive sixteen hours of instruction a week. Besides this, boys have from their ninth year two hours of gymnastics, and girls from their tenth year four hours of needlework, a week.

"All these arrangements refer in general to villages and cities. The local authorities are legally obliged to have at least one teacher for 120 scholars. If the authorities of a place appoint more than one teacher, they obtain the right of presentation, or nomination, and transform the school to an enlarged *Volksschule*. In the latter, the teacher has generally only one class, the scholars of the same age. These classes are instructed during the whole day, making twenty-six to thirty-six hours a week. The results of such schools are naturally far higher than in the simple *Volksschule*.

"In Karlsruhe there is, besides the enlarged *Volksschule*, a simple one, with half-day school time, and with a peculiar arrangement, permitting the scholars to study their home lessons for an hour a day in the schoolrooms, under the supervision of the teacher: this is for the benefit of those who have no place, nor light, nor time, for study at home. The teachers receive a special compensation for this service. This practice is new, but seems to be good. . . .

"The vacations of the *Volksschule* must not exceed eight weeks a year. Exceptionally, a prolongation, not exceeding two weeks, may be allowed for the three oldest years by the District School Board, for attending to agricultural labor: this is not allowed in industrial districts."

NOTE N.

[From E. H., dated Cassel, Nov. 16, 1877.]

"You are quite right in supposing that the arrangements mentioned by Dr. Lincoln [half-time schools] do not generally exist in Prussia, or at least only by way of exception. I add, —

"1. The general regulation of Oct. 15, 1872, established by the Department of Public Worship and Education, relating to the arrangement, task, and aim of the Prussian *Volksschule*, permits (No. 3) the half-day school 'in cases where the number of children in one school does not exceed 80, or where the schoolroom is not sufficient for even a smaller number, and the conditions do not permit the appointment of a second teacher,' etc. In such a school one teacher has to instruct all the scholars in two classes, one after the other, thirty-two hours a week, of which twenty are given to the upper class, and twelve to the lower.

"2. In accordance with the regulation (dated March 9, 1839) concerning

occupations of young persons employed in manufactures, the law of May 16, 1853, by which said regulation was amended, and the instruction of the Ministers of Commerce, of Education, and of the Interior, dated Aug. 18, 1853, relating to the execution of this Act, juvenile workmen employed in manufactures, beginning with the age of twelve years, must receive school instruction for three hours daily.

"3. In a few districts the absence of school children may be sanctioned during the summer months, for tending the cattle, for agricultural work, etc., provided that their parents can not dispense with their assistance, that the children are older than eleven years, that they have attended school regularly till that time, and that the results of their instruction are at least of average excellence: but in any case, with the restriction that they must attend school twelve hours a week, which will be fixed (absolutely required).

"4. In summer, unbroken vacations of more than four to six weeks are not allowed."

NOTE O.

Rev. G. F. Siegmund of New York states that he was well acquainted with a half-time school at Celle, in Prussia, where his father was inspector of schools. The scholars were children of agricultural laborers; they attended school from seven to ten A.M., and were therefore able to work three-quarters of a day, for which they received five sgr., or half a man's wages. There were fifty children and one master. The results were extremely good, and the children learned as much as those in the *Volksschulen*. At Annaberg there was a regularly formed four-class half-time school, with which he was personally acquainted: the results were equal to those of whole-time schools "because they had an excellent master."

NOTE P.

[From AUGUSTUS D. SMALL, Superintendent of Schools, Salem, Mass.]

"You ask concerning the compliance of our school with the statute (chap. 52, Acts 1876). You will find that attendance at a half-time school for twenty weeks is all that the law, at the option of the committee, requires. If the committee should not allow this plan of half-day attendance, they would thereby oblige every child (conditions specified) to attend all day for twenty weeks. The committee took the easiest course, I think, in the establishment of the half-time school. Had a more rigid course been attempted, the distress produced and the ill-feeling engendered would probably soon have overthrown what was accomplished. I feel less concern about the half-timers than about the no-timers. I feel sure that there are from fifty to a hundred children, that are growing up in ignorance here, who do not attend school for one or two years at a time. The law (chap. 52) is favorable to the would-be evader, and very hard to enforce. The *onus probandi* is thrown upon the complainant. He must be able to prove his allegation.

"The law should be so constructed that the defendant must be able to prove his school attendance. A child moving here from another place

may or not have attended school there. He can not be identified without great cost, if at all; and his record can not, therefore, be questioned for a year. At the end of that time, he moves on to some other locality to evade the law again. If, when challenged, he had to produce testimony of school attendance, the case would be much easier for us to handle.

"Then I think that provision should be made for the temporary relief of those kept by family want from school, and that, without holding out incentives to the lazy to become objects of charity. The whole question is a difficult one, I know; but until the law is improved, at these points at least, it will be inoperative in those very cases where it should be most effective."

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